

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 2564

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IRAN

USDOC WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS MANAMA 1254

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : BEXP, BA

SUBJECT : AMERICAN DESIGNERS FASHION SHOW

1. DISPLAY OF AMERICAN FASHIONS IN BAHRAIN ARRANGED BY MR. CHANNING CASSETT ON NOVEMBER 3 AND 4 WAS A PLEASANT SOCIAL DIVERSION AND AN IMPRESSIVE INTRODUCTION OF AMERICAN FASHIONS TO THIS MARKET. IT WAS ALSO OF SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL BENEFIT TO THE LOCAL CHARITY SPONSORING IT. AS WE HAD SUSPECTED AND ADVISED CASSETT LAST SUMER, HOWEVER, IT WAS NOT A COMMERCIAL SUCCESS, AT LEAST IN TERMS OF IMMEDIATE DIRECT SALES.

2. CASSETT GROUP'S TWO PERFORMANCES IN BAHRAIN WERE STAGED AT THE GULF HOTEL UNDER SPONSORSHIP OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE OF LEADING BAHRAINI CHARITY MOTHER AND CHILD ASSOCIATION. TURNOUT FOR EVENING "GALA" DINNER PERFORMANCE NOVEMBER 3 WAS PREDICTABLY DISAPPOINTING WITH ONLY 60 GUESTS PAYING \$25 EACH TO ATTEND. FULLY ONE-THIRD OF THESE WERE "PILLARS" OF AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY WHOSE ATTENDANCE FOR OCCASION WAS DRUMMED UP LARGELY BY WIVES OF AMBASSADOR AND OIL COMPANY PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN WOMENS ASSOCIATION. AS WE HAD EARLIER ADVISED CASSETT, THOSE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING SUCH AN EVENT IN BAHRAIN WERE BY AND UNCLASSIFIED

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LARGE NOT THE LOCAL CITIZENRY ABLE TO AFFORD THE FASHIONS

SHOWN. AFTERNOON TEA PERFORMANCE FOR LADIES ONLY NOBEMBER 4 WAS BY CONTRAST A SELLOUT PERFORMANCE WITH OVER 200 LADIES, HEADED BY THE AMIR'S WIFE, ATTENDING. WEEK-LONG CLAMOR FOR SEATS AT THIS PERFORMANCE PROVED EARLIER ASSESSMENT THAT A SECOND PERFORMANCE FOR LADIES ONLY WOULD HAVE BEEN PREFERABLE TO AN EVENING DINNER EVENT FOR COUPLES.

3. CASSETT GROUP MADE QUITE FAVORABLE IMPACT IN BAHRAIN. AMBASSADOR'S WIFE AND CHARITY GROUP LEADERS TOOK MODELS TO CALL ON AMIR'S WIFE MORNING NOBEMBER 4, AND AT RECEPTION AT RESIDENCE EVENING NOVEMBER 4 BOTH CASSETT GROUP AND LOCAL CHARITY LEADERS EXPRESSED PLEASURE AT THE WAY THINGS HAD GONE IN BAHRAIN. LOCAL CHARITY RAISED OVER \$5,000 FROM EVENT, LARGELY THROUGH DIRECT DONATIONS FROM AMIR'S WIFE AND HER DAUGHTERS.

4. CASSETT GROUP RESERVED NOVEMBER 5 FOR DIRECT SALES. EMBASSY CHECKED WITH CASSETT JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE THAT EVENING. HE INDICATED VIRTUALLY NOTHING HAD BEEN SOLD DURING BAHRAIN STAY.

5. COMMENT: WE FIND NO FLAW IN ORGANIZATION AND EXECUTION OF THIS AMERICAN SALES EFFORT HERE. IT WAS WELL-SPONSORED AND SUPPORTED LOCALLY AND MADE FAVORABLE IMPACT. BLEAK SALES RESULTS REFLECT REALITY THAT NUMBER OF WOMEN WILLING AND ABLE TO PAY PRICES OF DRESSES EXHIBITED IN BAHRAIN IS SMALL AND IS BY AND LARGE NOT YET ACCUSTOMED TO AMERICAN FASHIONS. POSSIBLY THE CASSETT GROUP'S EFFORTS HERE WILL RESULT IN GREATER RECEPTIVITY BY BAHRAINI BUYERS TO AMERICAN FASHIONS IN THE FUTURE.  
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